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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/515,793	02/29/2000	Damon V. Danicli	MICR0183	1134
27792	7590	11/02/2006	EXAMINER	
RONALD M. ANDERSON MICROSOFT CORPORATION 600 108TH AVENUE N.E., SUITE 507 BELLEVUE, WA 98004			ZIA, SYED	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2131	

DATE MAILED: 11/02/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/515,793

Applicant(s)

DANIELI ET AL.

Examiner

Syed Zia

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 July 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6, 8-25 and 27-34 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 33 and 34 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 10, 13-20, 27-29 and 32 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4-6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 21-25, 30 and 31 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

This office action is in response to response filed on July 28, 2006. Applicant amended Claims 14, and 25. The amendment filed have been entered and made of record. Presently claims 1-6, 8-25, and 27-34 are pending.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claim claims 1-6, 8-25, and 27-34 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 33-34 are allowed.

Claims 4-6, 8-9, 11-12, 21-25, and 30-31 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an

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international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1-3, 10, 13, 14-20, 27-29, and 32 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Sinclair et al. (U. S. Patent 6,554,707)

1. Regarding Claim 1 Sinclair teach and describe a method for enabling a host player to select one or more other participants to join in playing a multiplayer online electronic game, comprising the steps of: enabling the host player to create a list of contacts comprising one or more other persons who may be interested in participating in playing the multiplayer online electronic game, enabling the host player to select one or more of the other persons from among the list of contacts to participate in playing the multiplayer online electronic game; automatically sending an electronic invitation to each of the one or more other persons selected by the host player, to join in playing the multiplayer online electronic game, and enabling each of the one or more other persons who receive the electronic invitation that was automatically sent, to selectively join the multiplayer online electronic game as a participant, and providing an availability status for each person in the list of contacts so as to enable the host player to identify persons in the list of contacts who are currently available for playing the multiplayer online electronic game (Fig.6-10, col.2 line 7 to line 45, col.5 line 59 to col.6 line 65, col.12 line 47 to col. 13 line 14, and col.14 line 30 to col.15line 28).

2. Regarding Claim 14 Sinclair teach and describe a method for enabling a host player to select one or more other players to participate in a multiplayer online electronic game played using a plurality of electronic devices linked in communication over a communications network, each of

said plurality of electronic devices being operated by a different player, the method comprising the steps of: enabling the host player to initiate a chat session; enabling the host player to invite one or more other players to join the chat session, enabling any of the players who were invited by the host, to be a participant in the chat session; enabling the host player to forward a network address corresponding to an electronic device being operated by the host to any other player participating in the chat session; automatically launching an instance of the multiplayer online electronic game on each electronic device being operated by any player participating in the chat session, said step of automatically launching being in response to a game initiating action performed by the host player so that any player participating in the chat session automatically becomes a participant in the multiplayer online electronic game, and enabling each player to transmit voice chat data to all of the other players who have joined the chat session (Fig.6-10, col.2 line 7 to line 45, col.5 line 59 to col.6 line 65, col.12 line 47 to col. 13 line 14, and col.14 line 30 to col.15line 28).

3. Regarding Claim 29 Sinclair teach and describe a method for enabling a host player to select one or more other players to participate in a multiplayer online electronic game played using a plurality of electronic devices linked in communication over a communications network, each of said plurality of electronic devices being operated by a different player, the method comprising the steps of: enabling the host player to initiate a voice chat session; enabling the host player to invite one or more other players to join the voice chat session; enabling any of the players who were invited by the host, to be a participant in the voice chat session; enabling the host player to forward a network address corresponding to an electronic device being operated by the host to any other player participating in the voice chat session; and transmitting a voice chat message from the host

player to any other player participating in the voice chat session, said voice chat message identifying a multiplayer online electronic game that the host player will be launching or has already launched on the electronic device operated by the host player so that any other player participating in the voice chat session can selectively launch an instance of the multiplayer online electronic game on the electronic device operated by the player, so that any player participating in the chat session who selectively launches the multiplayer online electronic game becomes a participant in the multiplayer online electronic (Fig.6-10, col.2 line 7 to line 45, col.5 line 59 to col.6 line 65, col.12 line 47 to col. 13 line 14, and col.14 line 30 to col.15line 28).

4. Claims 2-3, 10, 13, 15, 16-20, 27-28, and 32 are rejected applied as above rejecting Claims 1, 14, 29, and 33. Furthermore, the system of Sinclair teach and describe a system and method of computer games that is played over computer network, wherein:

As per Claims 2-3, further comprising the step of providing an availability status for each person in the list of contacts so as to enable the host player to identify persons in the list of contacts who are currently available to participate in playing the multiplayer online electronic game; and further comprising the step of enabling each person in the list of contacts to select the availability status indicating the person's availability for participating in playing the multiplayer online electronic game (col.5linr line 34 to line 58).

As per Claim 10, further comprising the steps of providing a list of multiplayer online electronic games to the host player; and enabling the host player to select the multiplayer online electronic game from said list of multiplayer online electronic games (col.12 line 47 to col. 13 line 14).

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As per Claims 15-20, the step of providing a network address of the electronic device the host player is using and operating so as to enable the host player to invite one or more other players to join in playing the multiplayer online electronic game, by referencing said network address; and wherein the host player is a member of an online messaging service that enables the host player to build a player contact list comprising a list of one or more players with whom the host prefers to chat and/or play multiplayer online electronic games, further comprising the steps of: (a) displaying the player contact list to the host player; and (b) enabling the host player to select one or more other players to participate in playing the multiplayer online electronic game from the player contact list (col.5 line 52 to col.6 line 10) ; and

the step of providing an availability status for each player in the player contact list; the step of enabling each player to select an availability status indicating the player's availability to join a chat session; further comprising the steps of: (a) providing a user interface including a first display area on which the list of contacts is displayed and a second display area corresponding to a voice chat session; and (b) enabling the host to select the one or more contacts to invite to join the voice chat session by selecting one or more contacts from among the list of contacts displayed in the first display area and dragging and dropping them onto the second display area; and wherein a plurality of contacts can be selected and dragged and dropped onto the second display area at one time (Fig-9-10, col.6 line 35 to line 65).

AS per Claim 27, further comprising the steps of providing a list of multiplayer online electronic games; and enabling the host player to select the multiplayer online electronic game that will be played (col.11 line 14 to line 40).

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As per Claims 13, 28, and 32, a computer readable medium having computer executable instructions for performing the steps recited in above Claims (col.12 line 47 to col. 13 line 14).

Conclusion


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Syed Zia whose telephone number is 571-272-3798. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:00 to 5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ayaz Sheikh can be reached on 571-272-3795. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

SZ

October 16, 2006


SYED ZIA
PRIMARY EXAMINER
AM 2/31